The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

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AGITATE ! EDUCATE ! ORGANIZE !

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"SOCIAL STRUCTURE RESTS ON WORKERS"

—President Wilson.

Milan, Italy, Jan. 11.—"The working classes are the foundation of society," was one of the sentiments expressed by President Wilson in reply to the welcome of the mayor of Milan. The president said:

"I am as keenly aware, I believe, sir, as anybody can be that the social structure rests upon the great working classes of the world and that those working classes in several countries are the world here by their consciousness of community of interest, by their consciousness of community of purpose more than any other influence has to establish a world opinion which, after all, is not the opinion of not of a continent but is the opinion, one might say, of mankind; and I am aware, sir, that those of us now charged with the very great and serious responsibility of conducting peace must think, act and confer in the presence of this opinion and that we are not masters of the fortunes of any nation, but are the servants of humanity and that is not our privilege to follow special interests, but it is our manifest duty to study only the general interest."

In another address in this city President Wilson made this reference to the men and women who battle for liberty:

"Force can always be conquered, but the spirit of liberty can never be, and the hardest circumstances through the history of liberty is that its champions have always shown the most self-sacrifice. They have always been willing to subordinate their personal interests to the common cause. They have not wished to dominate their fellow men, but have wished to serve them. This is what gives imperishable victory, and with that victory has come always a change of mind accomplished in scenes like this—the coming together of the hearts of friends and the sympathy of great bodies of people who do not speak the same vocabulary, but speak the same ideas."

OPPOSE ANTI-STRIKE LAW.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Opposition to any form of compulsory arbitration legislation was voiced by Samuel Gompers before the senate committee on education and labor which has under consideration a resolution by Senator Kenyon providing for the establishment of industrial and social conditions.

The trade union executive said that any attempt by law to prevent men from quitting their employment would be futile.

"Of course," said President Gompers, "coercion can make a man a slave in character, but it will be violated."

"Hitch a horse to a plow and you will," said President Gompers, "when the law and the courts undertake to tell the workers that they cannot leave this work, that moment you have put the shackles on him."

Mr. Gompers declared that "organized labor is not going to take kindly to standing in the queue for a 2 pound of bread and a cup of coffee." He said that consequences should be faced following a rapid demobilization of the army to compete with the present labor of those who had taken up the department of labor's conciliation branch seriously.

"I should not say seriously," he added, "but congress does take the department of labor seriously." Senator Kenyon interrupted to admit that it had been extremely generous the past year to secure appropriations from congress for the department of labor.

ILLITERACY MUST GO.

Charleston, S. C., Jan. 11.—The illiteracy commission which this state has appealed to South Carolina pride to assist in the abolition of illiteracy.

"The shame of being the most laggard of all the states in literacy," says the commission, "should sting the decent self respect of every South Carolinian into vigorous action. The terrific test to which our political, social and industrial competence will be put in the fierce after-war struggle, demands universal education as a condition of self-preservation.

"We believe in education because it makes us degree intelligent and induces us to endeavor to be big of mind, generous of soul and sound of body. We believe in public education because it makes it easy to live the life of a free man in a free country. We believe in education at public expense because it is the payment of a just debt that a citizen owes his state for the latter fostering care to see to it that the most valuable asset is that of enlightened and educated citizenship."

The illiteracy commission was appointed by Governor Manning in 1917.

JANITORS RAISE WAGES.

Chicago, Jan. 11.—With an almost 100 per cent organization, janitors in this city succeeded in winning their strike for higher wages. Salaries are doubled in some cases. Under the new agreement janitors will be given 15 days' notice before he can be discharged. If he lives in the building he must have 15 days to move. The workers must give 15 days' notice if they desire ending their employment. Wives of janitors can not be hired for regular work. This stops the practice of an entire family working to secure a bare living.

PAPER RULERS UNITE.

Boston, Jan. 11.—Paper rulers in this city have organized and affiliated with the international Brotherhood of Bookbinders.

Indianapolis, Jan. 11.—During the month of December 161 new members joined the international Brotherhood of bookbinders. The brotherhood has issued a charter to the paper rulers employed in the Kansas City paper box industry, cutters, gluing machine operators and assistants.

FRAME SAFETY LAW.

Olympia, Wash., Jan. 11.—A safety bill has been prepared by a committee of employers and employes appointed by the state industrial commission. The bill provides a rule of duty for employer and employed in respect to safety of workmen, machinery, plant and for the establishment of standards of safety.

BUREAU FOR HOMESEEKERS.

Washington, Jan. 11.—A homeseekers' bureau has been established by the railroad administration to give free information about opportunities in western states. Persons who wish to engage in farming, stock raising, gardening and similar occupations,

NOLAN INDICTMENTS QUASHED BY COURT

San Francisco, Jan. 11.—Superior Court Judge Griffin has dismissed three indictments against Edward D. Nolan, charged with manufacturing the bomb used in the alleged Mooney preparedness day bomb explosion parade on July 22, 1916.

Nolan was in jail nine months, but after the Oxman perjury expose he was admitted to bail, when Captain of Detectives Duncan announced that the police had no evidence to hold the union machinist.

District Attorney Fickert, through one of his assistants, agreed to the dismissal of the indictments. There are still pending against Nolan three indictments in Judge Dunne's court and two in Judge Cabanni's court.

When Nolan was arrested District Attorney Fickert planned the frame of a hostile public opinion by charging that "the ingredients of a high explosive" were found in the home of the accused. The defense showed that the "high explosive" was ordinary Epsom salts. Fickert then found an "expert" who claimed that the explosive could be used in the manufacture of bombs.

The dismissal of the indictments is another one of the many reverses received by the prosecution since the Oxman perjury discovery. Before that Warren K. Billings was sentenced to life imprisonment and Thomas J. Mooney was sentenced to death, which has since been changed to life imprisonment by Governor Stephens. Following the Oxman exposure Mrs. Mooney and Israel Weinberg were acquitted at their first trials. In these prosecutions perjury did not use Oxman, the principal witness against Mooney.

CONTROL 665 CONCERNS.

Washington, Jan. 11.—At a hearing on the meat industry before the house interstate commerce committee Chairman Lever of the federal trade commission said 665 active companies are under the direct control or operation of one or the other of the "big five" packers, while 125 have no connection whatever. Some control of 85 other companies is exercised, he said, in 23 cases the packers' control is in the minority and in 50 the extent of their control is unknown.

The "big five" are the Swift, Armour, Morris, Wilson and Cudahy companies.

The federal trade commissioner declared that the operation of refrigerator cars by independent meat packers had been profitable, but in reality is a losing venture."

"Railroads furnish such poor service to meat packers that they soon find that they cannot continue to operate," said President Gompers, "when the law and the courts undertake to tell the workers that they cannot leave this work, that moment you have put the shackles on him."

Mr. Gompers declared that "organized labor is not going to take kindly to standing in the queue for a 2 pound of bread and a cup of coffee." He said that consequences should be faced following a rapid demobilization of the army to compete with the present labor of those who had taken up the department of labor's conciliation branch seriously.

"I should not say seriously," he added, "but congress does take the department of labor seriously." Senator Kenyon interrupted to admit that it had been extremely generous the past year to secure appropriations from congress for the department of labor.

OPPOSE "NO-STRIKE" LAW.

Denver, Jan. 11.—The Colorado state federation of labor will ask the state legislature to repeal the "no-strike" law and substitute compulsory mediation and conciliation in the settlement of industrial disputes.

The workers also demand the repeal of the state constabulary law.

Other legislation sought is:

Amendment to the workmen's compensation law, which will increase the compensation, allow a waiting period, state insurance, and make it more easy of operation.

Repeal of the anti-boycott law.

Enactment of an anti-injunction law.

Amendment to the women's minimum wage law by which compensation of sufficient amount to put it into force.

Enactment of a car shed law.

Amendment to the child labor law, which the same apply to the Ute beet fields.

The United Mine Workers of America have prepared three bills, applying to the working conditions of coal miners.

FORD RAISES WAGES.

Detroit, Mich., Jan. 11.—A new minimum wage scale of $6 a day, for 8 hours, went into effect today for approximately 28,000 employes throughout the country has been announced by the Ford Motor company. It is stated that 22,000 other employes of the Ford organization already receive $6 or more a day.

Following this statement comes the announcement that a 50 per cent dividend has been declared by the company. Further dividends are promised to be declared monthly in short time. The Ford family own 58 per cent of the corporation's stock.

Henry Ford has resigned as president of the Ford Motor company and Edsel B. Ford has been elected to succeed him at a salary of $150,000 a year. The new official is 24 years old.

DEMANDS EIGHT-HOUR DAY.

Boston, Jan. 11.—A demand for the eight-hour day for 1,000 employes of the Bethlehem Shipbuilding corporation in Quincy was made by Mayor Curley in an address at the opening of the state legislature.

"No state," he said, "should permit a transgression of the eight-hour day when that transgression threatens to impair the health of its people. We can afford to lose from our borders the industries which cannot exist save by self-sacrifice, but we cannot withhold the physical well being and development of mothers and future citizens.

TO EXTEND INITIATIVE.

Little Rock, Ark., Jan. 11.—Petitions will be circulated to amend the state constitution so that any number of amendments may be submitted to the people for popular approval through direct legislation. The constitution provides a rule of duty for employer and employed in respect to safety of workmen, machinery, plant and for the establishment of standards of safety.

ENGLISH CHURCHMEN URGE HIGHER IDEALS

London, England, Jan. 11.—A committee of churchmen, headed by the bishop of Winchester, has published its report on "Christianity's Industrial Problems."

It is stated that as late as the American civil war treatises were being written to defend slavery, and that a future age will probably look upon some features of our industrial system with similar surprise at the feeling that now exists on the slavery question.

The committee declares that it is the duty of the church, while avoiding denunciation of the practical methods, to insist that Christian ethics are as binding upon economic conditions and industrial organizations as upon personal conduct and relations.

The sufferings of children, inadequate wages, bad housing conditions and irregularity of employment are matters which society as a whole should investigate. It is important, the report states, to insist that what is wrong for an individual to do cannot be right for a collective body.

The main charge upon every industry should be the payment of sufficient wages to enable the worker to maintain himself and family in health and honor, with such a margin for leisure as will provide reasonable recreation and the development of mind and spirit.

It is declared that the principle of the living wage involves not merely the question of the worker's employment, but continuity of employment. The deliberate casualization of labor merely for the convenience of employes is strongly to be condemned.

The employment of child labor is condemned as "folly and injustice," and it is stated that in all cases the demands of industry should not be allowed to prevent adequate means securing full opportunities of education as a human being and a citizen.

It is declared that trade unions and employers' associations are the best foundation for mutual understanding, industrial peace and social progress, and that the representatives of these two interests should be elected, not only on questions and wages, "but all such questions affecting industry as may be suitable for common discussion."

OFFERS AFTER-WAR PLAN.

Boston, Jan. 11.—The central labor union has adopted a reconstruction program which will be submitted for consideration to the state branch of the A. F. of L.

The program in part provides: "That all returning soldiers and sailors be found places in industry by the government; that wages shall not be reduced; that all boys and children under the age of 16 years will be protected; that the operation and fact of equal pay for equal work, irrespective of sex, shall be established by industry and congress; that workers shall have the unrestricted right to organize and to organize, and act collectively in all matters in industry and commerce; that the operation of the international government shall assume the position and give the road any traffic from that point."

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LIBERTY BONDS "JUGGLED."

New York, Jan. 11.—In a report on causes that have led to the price decline of liberty bonds Assembly District Attorney Brogan shows how such men as Charles W. Morse and others at the same time reap a rich harvest, through fictitious selling of liberty bonds.

The official states that in many cases these bonds were sold at liberty bonds gave their brokers a selling order for the transaction. Thus on $1,500,000 worth of these bonds at the same time pottime in an order to buy the same amount at the market price thus establishing a fictitious loss to the government of $1,500,000 or more. The same method has been followed with other securities and probably with the brokers own business secretly, it is stated. The government will lose millions of dollars income taxes.

TO KEEP WORK GOING.

Washington, Jan. 11.—The department of labor has created a new activity, to be known as the division of public works and construction development. Its purpose is to urge the construction of public works and private enterprises.

It is stated that there are but two possibilities of avoiding serious unemployment during the remainder of the winter. One is the successful plan of continuing on a large scale the production of war materials. The other is the development of public works on a gigantic building construction. The department of labor intends to encourage the latter theory.

REFUSES TO ARBITRATE.

New York, Jan. 11.—The Dress and Waist Manufacturers' association has refused to arbitrate the question of the minimum wages with the organized employes. President Schlesinger of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' union suggested that differences be referred to an impartial tribunal, but this was rejected.

The unionists say the association has but 30 per cent of the industry because of tactics similar to its present attitude.

REFUSE HIGHER RATES.

St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 11.—The state railroad commission has denied the application of the Tri-State Telegraph and Telephone company and Northwestern Telephone Exchange company for an increase in rates in this state. The companies said they wanted to raise wages, but the commission held that this was possible without increase to the public.

COAL DRIVERS STRIKE.

Madison, Wis., Jan. 11.—Nearly 100 coal wagon drivers suspended work to enforce a wage scale that will guarantee $5 a day standard.

WORLD LABOR LEAGUE CAN'T SET STANDARDS

Washington, Jan. 11.—A proposed world labor league, credited to the British war cabinet, will not be accepted by American workers, who will insist on setting their own standards, declared A. F. of L. Frank Morrison, replying to a newspaper agency's request for an opinion on this project.

Dispatches from London state that the league conference will be asked to appoint a commission to inquire into the question of an international adjustment of conditions of employment "to prepare the way for international regulation of conditions and employment, which would be a death blow to trusts."

"No one will object," said Secretary Morrison, "to dealing a death blow to trusting. That is possible if American labor will turn its efforts more to the international question.

"Under such a system, iron workers in America could not improve conditions of their personal standards and in excess of the Belgium iron worker, for instance, for we did not want good system—for the employers in America and England, whose workers are in competition with Belgium, to the continent.

"The only way to internationalize standards of working people is to first establish American standards. The only way to internationalization means that the American workers must maintain a standard of independents of men in the military services.

Many fathers and mothers named as beneficiaries of the government insurance policies of their sons have gained the impression that the allotment represents benefits they can receive this insurance.

Secretary Glass asks that the widest publicity be given to that a beneficiary, if within the permitted class of grandmother, grandchild, parent, brother or sister is entitled to receive the insurance in monthly installments during the period of dependency upon the insured.

Allotments are made by law in separate and apart from insurance. Compensation may be payable in addition to insurance, and the father must prove actual dependency upon the soldier or sailor before he can be granted compensation.

The bureau of war risk insurance is charged with the duty of determining the facts of actual dependency upon the deceased son for the necessary certificate in order that the additional payment of compensation."

WANTS TO HOLD RAILROADS.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Before a senate committee Director General of Railroads McAdoo urged that the government retain the railroads for five years after the declaration of peace. Director McAdoo declared that the railroads shall be returned to their owners 21 months after the declaration of peace.

The director general insisted that a program of improvements could be carried out in five years. In defending the loss of revenue under government control he said that the passenger had not lost—that only through private operation could the high transportation of troops and supplies was the war possible. He further declared that the service rendered should not be overlooked. Attention was called to the fact that the government will operate steamships for five years, and that experience has shown could that be a success if railroads are under private management.

MINE CONDITIONS BAD.

Columbus, Ohio, Jan. 11.—In a study of the health of Ohio coal miners, conducted by Dr. Emory L. Bogardus, under the department of health, it is stated that working conditions in the mines of Ohio are worse than those in the average of most industries in this state. While ventilation in the mines is good, there are many of them are of a damp and muddy type and work in such mines exposing to this hazard is large. Blasting during working hours fills the mines with poisonous gases and accidents considerable health complaints. The mine laws, it is stated, should be amended in this respect and the division of mines given a larger force to compel obedience.

TRADE UNIONS PROTECT.

London, England, Jan. 11.—Since the armistice was signed, it is contended that it will take over the railroads there has been almost a complete breakdown of the workers' political rights being interferred with.

This amalgamation is printed in Reynolds's Newspaper:

"So far as railway workers are concerned, they intend to prevent any interference with their political and industrial rights, and any attempt or any encroachment in this direction, by force, their strong trade organization."

HOW TROOPS WERE HANDLED.

Washington, Jan. 11.—In his report to congress Director General Hines of federalized railroads, Director General of Railroads McAdoo said that 1,429,000 troops were handled between January and November 30, last year. These movements averaged 46,084 a month and the maximum was reached in July, with 2,000,000.

The number of men handled in Pullman cars was 1,963,294, and the number in tourist cars 1,000,000.

FLU INCREASES DEATH RATE.

Washington, Jan. 11.—The influenza epidemic caused 12,000 deaths in 30 large cities and last year increased the combined death rate for those communities to 23.6 per 1,000, according to census bureau statistics. Total figures for the country are not available.

Baltimore, with 35.1 per 1,000, and Nashville with 35.6 had the highest rates. The lowest rates were in cities, while St. Paul with 13.9 and Minneapolis with 14.2 and Newark with 14.3 largest cities had small

ROCKEFELLER'S PLAN WOULD DODGE ISSUE

Indianapolis, Jan. 11.—The United Mine Workers' Journal is not fooled by the phrases of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Charles M. Schwab, who discussed the labor question before a conference of business men at Atlantic City recently.

Rockefeller told the business men about his Colorado "union," which claimed to be established "to conciliate to foremen and clear up to the general manager.

"In this instance," says the United Mine Workers' Journal, "it is the boss and the representative of the employer who makes the decision. The employe merely has the right to accept the decision of his employer.

"It will be noted that Rockefeller named a subsidiated 'union' company as one of the corporations that had adopted the Rockefeller industrial plan. But he did not mention once that, after trying that plan, the company abandoned it and dumped it in the discard and in its place entered into a working and wage agreement with the United Mine Workers of America on a union basis.

Rockefeller said that there should be closer co-operation between employer and employe and that there should be a community of interest. But his plan contemplates that the employer shall have the last word in the decision of all complaints and grievances.

"It seemed to dawn on the employers at this conference that labor was in a sovereign class by itself and not in American industry, and there were those who said a good word for organized labor.

"But on the final shot down the conference approved the Rockefeller plan, which is ultra opposed to the principles of organized labor. Therefore it becomes evident that organized labor has got to fight for everything that it gets from now on.

"Acceptance of the Rockefeller industrial plan means that the working men would be compelled to throw aside all of the hopes that they have built up on the foundation of the labor movement. This will not do. Employes must find something behind the Rockefeller plan as a basis for meeting the labor problem."

NEW MINIMUM WAGE.

San Francisco, Jan. 11.—The new wage order for women and minors, issued by the California wellare commission, became law in effect. Ten dollars for a 48-hour week is the minimum wage for all adult and experienced women or minors. Six months' work means experience for an adult woman and one year's work for a minor. For part-time work the rate is 30 cents an hour for experienced adults and minors. Adult learners, entering employment at 19 and under, may be paid $8.50 for 48 hours a week for the first three months, $9 a week the second three months, and are then considered experienced workers.

Minor learners beginning under 18 years of age are to be paid not less than $8 per week for the first three months; $8 per week for the second three months; $9 a week for the third three months, when considered experienced workers. If the output of the employe is less than 75 per cent of the total average output of adult women, such minor must be paid the adult rate. For part-time work learners will be paid not less than 30 cents an hour; an 18 year old less than 31 cents an hour, and a 19 learner not less than 33 cents an hour.

The employment of learners allowed is not to exceed 25 per cent of the total number employed.

For work on commission, bonus, or piece-rate, earnings are to be not less than the minimum time rate of the wage group in which the worker belongs.

BACK TO THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

New York, Jan. 11.—Writing in the Annalist on reconstruction, Prof. Charles J. Gerretson looks back to the good old days of the survival of the fittest. He writes:

"As a matter of protection in unnatural circumstances, trade unions and collective bargaining have justified their existence and they may still justify their existence to everything in a revolutionary direction. But, fundamentally, they are not based on the law of nature, which is the survival of the fittest, but on a rule of the survival of the average."

In line with the theory of the rule of the strong, scientific management is opposed.

The writer is professor of finance of the New York school of commerce, accounts and finance.

DR. ELIOT'S VIEWS.

Boston, Jan. 11.—At a readjustment conference, held in the state house, Dr. Eliot, ex-president of Harvard university, said high wages of building trades mechanics made it impossible for American workers to own their homes.

High wages, he went on, are due to the "selfish ambition of the men who are able to get what they ask."

While admitting the facts show that the cost of living has increased 72 per cent during the last five years, Dr. Eliot was refuted by the educator.

In some circles Dr. Eliot is classed as an economic expert. He received considerable attention several years ago by declaring that the strikebreaker is an American hero."

OPPOSE PIECE WORK.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Members of the A. F. of L. metal trades department are conducting a campaign against piece work in the railroad shops of the country, it is stated. Piece work has already been abolished on the Baltimore & Ohio and the L. & N. railroads and ultimatums have been served on the Atlantic Coast Line, the Louisville & Nashville railroad, and shops of the New York Central lines. Officers of the metal trades department advise that this question be handled as a system federation and not as a local issue.

PRINTERS RAISE WAGES.

Dubuque, Iowa, Jan. 11.—The Typographical union has signed a three year agreement with employers which raises rates to 48 and 49 a week. The present scale is $42 a week. On the first of every year by either party on 60-days' notice.

ELECTRICIANS GAIN.

Tacoma, Wash., Jan. 11.—Municipal electricians and the city council have agreed upon a wage scale. The new rates are: Line men, foremen, $6.48 a day; line men, $5.76 a day; superintendent, $300 a month.

Low Wages and High Death Rate of Babes Go Together.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Every trade union argument against low wages and their effect upon society is packed into a chart that is part of the annual report of Miss Julia C. Lathrop, chief of the children's bureau, department of labor.

The chart shows that the death rate for babies whose fathers earned less than $650 was 161 per 1,000 births, and 85 per 1,000 in every six. When the fathers earned $1,250 or more, the death rate for their babies was 54.3 per 1,000 births, or one in 16.

The indictment against the evils of low wages that effects not only the family, but society as a whole was made possible by an investigation in eight cities. It is based upon interviews with mothers of nearly 25,000 live-born babies.

The report says that since these figures have been prepared, but—

Figures recently published by the bureau of labor statistics of the department of labor show a gratifying increase in the cost of living, afford no indication that the advance is limited. He can be at this time in proportion to the pressing increase in fathers' cash earnings."

SAYS FIVE-HOUR DAY BRINGS BEST RESULTS

London, England, Jan. 11.—Prof. Hobhouse, of the London school of economics, has little stock in the claim of some brain workers that they can work more than 8 hours a day. This claim is often used by the opponents of the eight-hour day movement.

Says Prof. Hobhouse says:

"When asked my personal view of the eight-hour question I have with my own experience.

"I have worked with my brain as hard as anybody for the best part of a lifetime; but since boyhood I have had a regular eight-hour day. The simple reason is that I get my best output on a five-hour day and my maximum output on a seven-hour day, and you would find many brain workers who, if they kept count of their work, could tell you the same thing.

"There are, indeed, some very tough jobs which can do a good deal more. I know a legal luminary who told me that he devoted at least 12 hours a day and then read metaphysics in his armchair. But I suppose that was merely because he was very good. Darwin, who could hardly be accused of intellectual inefficiency, worked only four hours a day regularly. And I remember the late master of Balliol who would be considered five muy hours' work as a good allowance for a normal person, and for those who were specially gifted with nervous energy seven hours' work."

"The less involved is immeasurably available and universally desired adequate care of child birth and the elements of which have accomplished a new step will have been taken in the prevention also of infant deaths among the large number of babies whose mothers escape the dangers involved in the lack of proper care."

MOB CHIEF ARRESTED.

Jackson, Mich., Jan. 11.—William Grimshaw, state commander of the Stabilarry, has been placed under $50 bonds for leading the mob that forced Secretary of Labor Herbert Crawford, organizer of the Machinists' union. The man was released on the same bail bond to another man whom they believed was a trade union organizer. Both men were charged with the murder of a traveling man.

The shooting was committed on November 2, last, and on December 4 the Saulte Ste Marie traveler died of his injuries. Sheeper, who seems well named. He replied.

"This is a case I have had in the back of my mind since I have had in the matter of Jackson. For some reason I had considerable misgiving about instituting it and will do so thoroughly, and hope it is not as bad as represented."

ENGLISH UNIONS GROW.

London, England, Jan. 11.—The government's department of labor statistics reports that the membership of English trade unionists at the end of 1917 was 5,397,522. In the previous year the total was 4,627,467.

This includes the total membership of the 133 trade unions reporting to the department. The increase in male members was 672,055, or 17.5 per cent. The total number of female members was 97,900, or 12.8 per cent.

It is stated that some of the unions of less skilled workers have increased their returns members in the military service.

GARY PREDICTS LOWER WAGE

Pittsburg, Pa., Jan. 11.—Lower wages were predicted by Judge Gary of the steel trust, at a banquet in this city. Wages would be reduced, because "readjustments," and declared that the United States Steel corporation "labor should be treated fairly."

"There will be readjustments of wages, but they will be gradually," he said, "but the readjustments in wages will be made in such a way that labor will recognize their justice. If employers are fair to labor we have no doubt labor will reciprocate."

TO URGE COMPENSATION.

Jefferson City, Mo., Jan. 11.—With the convening of the state legislature Missouri trade unionists are marshaling their forces to secure the passage of a workmen's compensation law.

COLORED WORKERS UNITE.

New Orleans, Jan. 11.—Colored boot and shoe workers have a union and affiliated with the A. F. of L.

Bethlehem Ship Building Corporation Finally Recognizes Union Movement

Washington, Jan. 11.—The Bethlehem Ship building corporation has signed an agreement with the A. F. of L. metal trades department, which represents 12 national and international trade unions. The agreement states that the corporation "recognizes the said unions collectively as a suitable agency to represent its employes in questions arising as to wages, hours of labor and general working conditions."

Under the agreement the unions are recognized as representing the employes, and they have appointed a committee of five international officers who will represent the 12 unions involved. The corporation also appoints a committee of five. These committees will jointly consider all matters covered by the agreement.

The internationals' committee, or any member thereof, or any person expressly authorized by said committee shall have access to any plant of the corporation on the business of the committee, in accordance with rules and regulations to be fixed by both parties.

The relations of the unions with the corporation and with the separate managements of its plants shall be carried on exclusively through the internationals' committee, or "in accordance with the rules and regulations fixed from time to time established, and not otherwise."

The internationals' committee shall pay the expenses of its own officers, agents or delegates, but the corporation will pay the reasonable compensation and expenses of five employes for time actually spent in service in craft or other committees in adjusting any rules that may from time to time be agreed upon.

A national or international union any of the trades of which are employes of the company, and which is not a member of the metal trades department, may become a party to the agreement by notice to the department and the corporation of its intention to conform to the agreement, and any union may withdraw from the agreement upon similar notice.

The agreement is signed by E. G. Grace and J. W. Powell, president and vice president of the corporation, and James O'Connell and A. J. Berres president and secretary-treasurer of the metal trades department. The significance of this agreement can be understood when it is stated that Mr. Grace is executive of the Bethlehem Steel company.

The Bethlehem Ship Building corporation is the ship building organization of the Bethlehem Steel corporation is the owner of the Fore River plants at Fall River, Mass.; the Union Iron works at San Francisco, the Sparrows Point plant at Baltimore, the Harlan plant at Wilmington, Del., the Moran plant in the river front at Seattle, and various smaller plants, altogether employing 75,000 men. Its production last year was 1,000,000 tons, or one-fifth of the naval construction of the entire country. It is the builder of the total merchant vessel tonnage.

OBJECT TO DISCRIMINATION.

Washington, Jan. 11.—The National Federation of Federal Employes will ask congress to repeal the law of 1917 which forbids transfers of employes to positions at a higher wage or with promotion in less than one year. The federation declares that this discriminating legislation is a blacklist in some departments. The result has been to "inexperienced government workers, although needed on war work, even when transferred thereto, were denied the wage belonging to such work. At the same time former and experienced appointees, brought in by the ten-thousand, have received a wage, at promotion, far less than the experienced workers were allowed."

The union urges that it is clear that it does not contend that the new workers were overpaid, but it protests against the inequality of wage scales in the government, and especially against the injustice of holding down the pay of experienced workers.

With the completion of better payrolls, the federation declares, congress could never have held these workers through the war if it is claimed, that the departments resorted to the blacklist plan, which stigmatized as unpatriotic any employe who resigned even though he was paid less than $2 a day. Congress should, it is said, have repeal of all restrictions on transfers after six months' employment.

NEGRO EDUCATION URGED.

Baton Rouge, La., Jan. 11.—"The necessity for negro education is urged in a pamphlet issued by the Louisiana department of education. It is stated that while Louisiana pays more for home manufactured goods than almost any other southern state, less money is expended on negro education than in any state in the union. It is shown that in some sections of the state the negro pays as much as 80 per cent in taxes, while receiving for the education of his race in the direct school taxes but 20 per cent.

"The dawn of a new day is upon us," the statement says. "We cannot look upon a twentieth century problem with the thirteenth century mind. It is time to put aside old doubts and fears and to espouse this cause in a new light.

"The glory of achievement in our white schools, the pathos and the pathetic and pitiable condition of our negro schools, contrasts in the past year has built up a system of schools for her white children that has commanded admiration and respect. Can she not, with the experience she has acquired, the means at her disposal, and the spirit to win, begin now to complete her crown of glory by completing the task she has so well begun and provide a school system for all of her children?"

MANY DEFECTS IN SHOPS.

New York, Jan. 11.—Following its annual inspection of shops in the state board of sanitary control, composed of employers and employes, reports that only 25 per cent of the places investigated are found free from defects or another, ranging from insanitary floors and pipes to lack of proper ventilation and lighting.

The report states that there is a notable decrease in the number of accidents and an increase in those with a comparative small number of workers.

This seems to indicate, says the Ladies' Garment Cutter, a tendency a return to the sweatshop system, a feature of which is the small shop with a few workers.

TELEGRAPHERS GAIN.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Wage increases of 6 and 10 per cent for 15,000 employes of 17 telegraph systems under government control have been announced by Director General Hines of Lessen.

The 6 per cent applies to employes who have been in the service continuously for six months and more than less than one-half years. The 10 per cent applies to employes who have been in the service continuously for more than one and one-half years. These rates are to be added to the minimum rates nor to premium earnings and the advance cannot raise wages more than $200 a month.

BETTER HOUSING URGED.

Sioux City, Iowa, Jan. 11.—A movement to secure better housing for the homes for working people in this state is gaining strength through the efforts of the state federation of labor. Organization of a state housing association, which was organized for the purpose of securing better housing conditions, will be completed at a meeting of delegates from Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Davenport and Sioux City.

ACTIVE IN WHEELING.

Wheeling, W. Va., Jan. 11.—The trade union movement is enthusiastic in the campaign to organize the iron and steel mills in this city.

COOPERS RAISE WAGES.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Coopers have been granted an increase of 5 cents an hour and overtime at the rate of time and one-half after eight hours, by the adjustment commission of the war labor board.

WORKERS' SICKNESS CAUSES MOST POVERTY

Philadelphia, Jan. 11.—The Pennsylvania health insurance commission has reported to the state that the single factor toward poverty.

The commission was created by the 1917 legislature to investigate sickness and the various health insurance plans in this and other countries and make its report to the legislature.

It is stated that more than 70,000 employes in Pennsylvania are ill every day in the year, or on an average of more than one in each wage worker, and that upward of 1,000 die every day and each year on account of sickness.

Sickness, the commission has learned, is the largest single factor toward destitution and pauperism.

Only 41 per cent of the sick aided by the united Hebrew charities of Philadelphia in 1915, sickness was the main factor. In 37 per cent of the cases handled by the local bureau of Jewish charities in 1916 sickness of parents was given as the reason for the application.

From 40 to 70 per cent of dependency in the state, the commission declares, is directly traceable to sickness.

Data gathered throughout the state, it is stated,

In an investigation of a mining community in which 1,000 families were visited, 1,000 cases of sickness and their families were found, which had been unknown. In Fayette county the death rate was 109 per 1,000.

FOOD COSTS INCREASE.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Food costs have increased 4 per cent between August 15 and September 15, according to bureau of labor statistics. Compared with last year, 1917, the increase was 17 per cent.

An increase of 72 per cent in food costs during the past five years period ending September 15 last. Every article of food shows increases during the five year period shown an increase of more than 50 per cent; meats, 72 per cent; increases of 100 per cent; bacon, 100 per cent; poultry, 100 per cent; fish, 100 per cent; lard, 100 per cent; flour, 146 per cent; eggs, 112 per cent, and corn meal, 113 per cent.

FREEDOM OF PRESS IS

Santa Fe, N. Mex., Jan. 11.—The state supreme court has rendered a decision in which it declares that it will not contempt the editor of a newspaper who criticised a judge who presided in his case.

In overruling the judgment of the court the supreme court declared that "under our theory of government the right of freedom of speech and of the press is essential to the public welfare," and that while the right of free speech did not warrant attacks on courts or judges which will interfere with the administration of justice, nevertheless the "force of public opinion has greatly restrained the power to punish for making disrespectful or improper remarks" concerning the judiciary.

BUSINESS AT OLD STAND.

Atlanta, Ga., Jan. 11.—Now that the war is over, the textile industry of this state has resumed business at the old stand and is again on an anti-union rampage.

An 8 preliminary he attacks the International Brotherhood of Electrical and Electric Railway Employes in a series of five speeches delivered in this city. For good measure the national war labor board is put on the grill. This is by the Atlanta Brown's shop-worn stuff.

The attack on the A. F. of L. and the Georgia federation of labor have virtually transformed law-abiding citizens of Atlanta, into anarchists, with murder in their hearts as soon as they get them organized.

JOHN WILLIAMS' NEW JOB.

Pittsburg, Pa., Jan. 11.—It has been announced that the offices of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers will be moved to Youngstown. Recently resigned as president of that organization to accept the more representative position with the Pacific Coast Co., company of Seattle, Wash., general office of Seattle, Portland and South San Francisco.

OLD WAGES DON'T SUIT.

Boston, Jan. 11.—It is reported in some quarters that returned soldiers seeking positions are demanding higher wages than those which they entered the army. This experience is said to be causing employers considerable thinking, "experts" state.

RAILWAY CLERKS UNITING.

Washington, Jan. 11.—Railway clerks are uniting in the organization of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, which has been granted a charter by the A. F. of L. The organization is now in the process of formation.